

*“A clean Cuyahoga River will benefit Akron residents and park visitors alike, as they use the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath and other beautiful park resources lying along the Cuyahoga River Valley.”*

John P. Debo, Jr. – Superintendent, Cuyahoga Valley National Park, 1988-2009

## The Benefits Of A Cleaner River

Improving the Akron sewer system will require a substantial investment by the community, but the long-term benefits will prove to be invaluable.

### Outdoor Attraction

The Cuyahoga River provides fishing and boating opportunities for millions of people every year. Plus, a clean river helps to sustain the surrounding parklands for hikers, campers and other outdoor enthusiasts. An improved sewer system will help to improve the quality of life for residents and make Akron an attractive draw for tourists seeking outdoor activities.

### New Jobs

Clean waterways are important resources when choosing locales for industrial plants, mills and other installations. The Akron area provides access to an uninterrupted source of competitively priced water. Improvements to the sewer system will help make Akron a more attractive destination for businesses, which will, in turn, bring more jobs to the area.

### Clean Currents

The Cuyahoga River is the southern gateway to Cuyahoga Valley National Park. Pollution that enters the river in Akron can be carried all the way to Lake Erie. By taking steps to reduce combined sewer overflows, we improve the local environment and the health of the entire northeastern Ohio ecosystem.

*“At a time when many areas of the country are afflicted by drought, Akron is uniquely situated to take advantage of our abundant water supply to create jobs and showcase our quality of life.”*

Don Plusquellic – Mayor, City of Akron



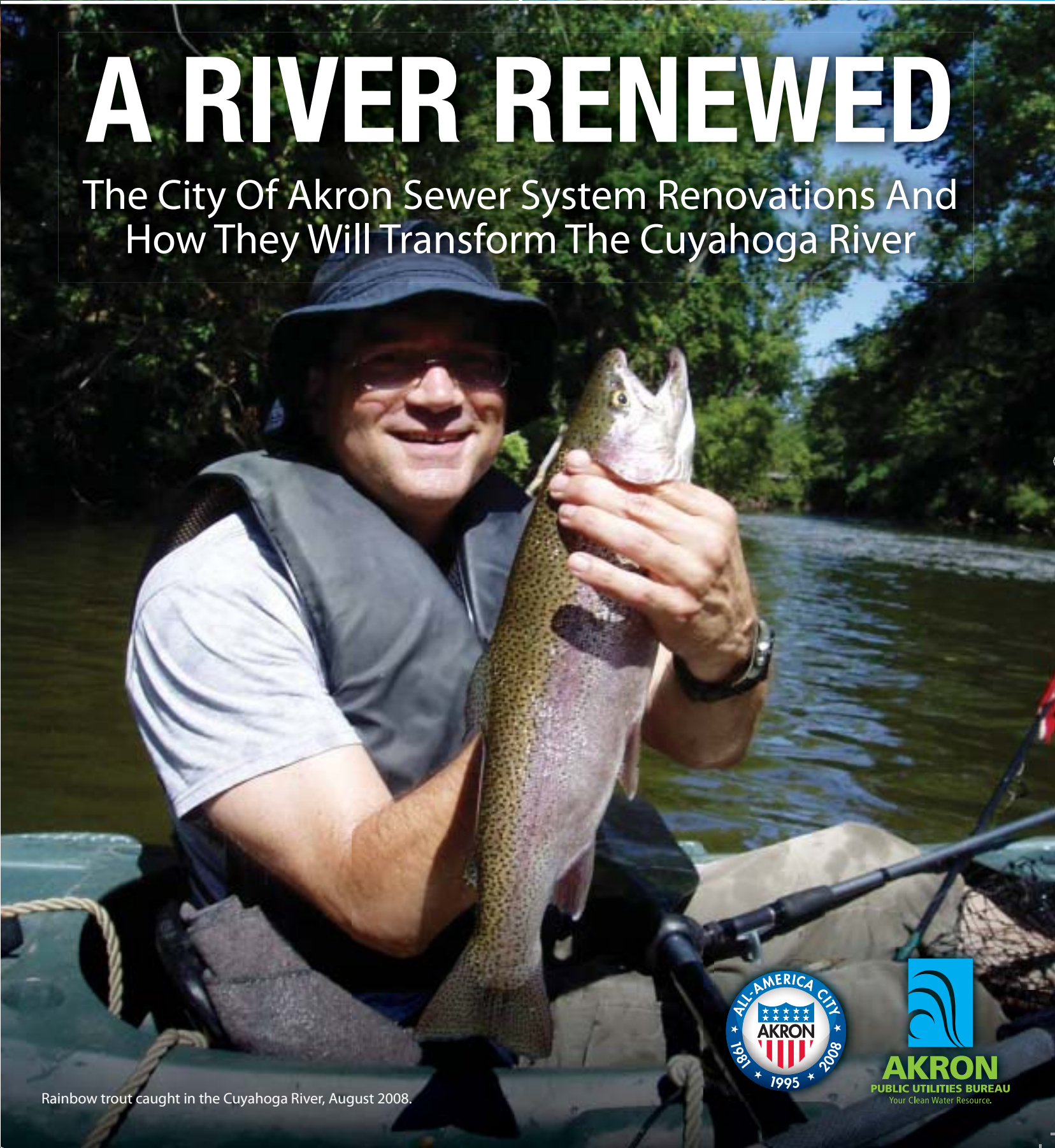
## Building a Healthier Tomorrow

Akron has a history of environmental consciousness. Each generation strives to leave the community in better shape for the next. An upgraded sewer system and a cleaner Cuyahoga River will help bolster our community and provide a healthier environment for generations to come.

Photos: Bruce Ford, Ray Flasco, Akron-Summit County Public Library

# A RIVER RENEWED

The City Of Akron Sewer System Renovations And How They Will Transform The Cuyahoga River



Rainbow trout caught in the Cuyahoga River, August 2008.





The combined sewer system under construction in the 1920s.



The Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) System

A Combined Sewer Overflow System collects both sewage and storm runoff in a single pipe. During times of heavy rain, the resulting overflow goes to nearby bodies of water, which can lead to serious water pollution problems.



Areas serviced by the CSO system and locations of overflow pipes.

Long Overdue Repairs

Akron was founded as a “canal town” in 1825. Its fate has been linked to the Ohio & Erie Canal and the Cuyahoga River ever since. Akron grew because of the two waterways. Industry used the waters of the river and the canal to create booming new industries, and today, the canal towpath and the Cuyahoga Valley provide recreation to millions of visitors each year.

Akron grew wildly between 1910 and 1920 because of the boom in the rubber shops. The city’s population doubled. Sewers were hastily installed and were never sufficient to handle the surge of new housing. Raw sewage flowed into the Cuyahoga River in Akron, Cleveland and points in between.

In 1922, Mayor D. C. Rybolt started work on a new sewage treatment plant at Botzum in the Cuyahoga Valley. It’s where sewage is still treated today for Akron and its neighboring communities. (The same 40-acre site today is home to a rookery of herons that return every spring to hatch and raise their young.)

During the days of the W.P.A. in the 1930s, unemployed men were put to work building new sewers. Combining the pipes that carried storm water runoff with sanitary sewers seemed like a good idea to designers of the day – even though it meant that during times of heavy rain, raw sewage would again flood the Cuyahoga.

By 1994, Akron had created a plan to control the overflows from the combined sewers. In 2006, Akron voluntarily asked sewer customers to invest in a \$22 million upgrade that handled approximately 30% of the problem and resulted in a river clean enough to sustain fish life again. Today, the sewer system is functional but still subpar by modern standards.

The Solution

In order to re-establish the Cuyahoga River as a clean, abundant water resource, major improvements to the Akron sewer system are needed. Therefore, in accordance with a mandate from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the City of Akron will undertake a sewer system improvement program estimated in excess of \$500 million to drastically reduce the amount of combined sewer overflow. These improvements will take place over the course of the next 20 years, with the ultimate goal being cleaner water and a healthier environment.

What This Means To You

In order to accomplish Akron sewer system improvements in accordance with federal requirements, sewer rates will have to increase to cover costs. The coming years will bring incremental rate increases for residential, commercial, industrial, suburban and master meter sewer users as outlined in the table. (Exact rates and billing charges beyond 2013 will be determined by the scope of the long-term plan.)

AKRON SEWER RATES 2010-2013					
User Class	Current Rate		Future Rates		
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
(\$/Month)					
Billing Charge – Akron	\$1.91	\$2.39	\$2.87	\$3.44	\$3.75
Billing Charge – Akron (HEAP)		\$2.24	\$2.58	\$2.96	\$3.16
Billing Charge – Suburban (Contract)	\$1.80	\$2.43	\$2.79	\$3.04	\$3.32
Master Meter	\$50.00	\$52.50	\$55.13	\$57.89	\$60.78
Residential (\$/Hundred Cubic Feet)					
Akron	\$3.035	\$3.794	\$4.533	\$5.463	\$5.955
Akron (HEAP)		\$3.560	\$4.094	\$4.708	\$5.026
JEDD	\$2.862	\$3.794	\$4.533	\$5.463	\$5.955
Suburban	\$2.706	\$3.619	\$3.800	\$3.990	\$4.190
Fairlawn (Contract)	\$2.547	\$3.176	\$3.335	\$3.502	\$3.677
Commercial (\$/HCF)					
Akron	\$2.852	\$4.038	\$4.644	\$5.34	\$5.821
JEDD	\$2.691	\$4.038	\$4.644	\$5.34	\$5.821
Suburban	\$2.697	\$3.610	\$3.790	\$3.980	\$4.179
Fairlawn (Contract)	\$2.538	\$3.167	\$3.325	\$3.492	\$3.666
Industrial (\$/HCF)					
Akron	\$3.812	\$5.291	\$6.084	\$6.997	\$7.627
JEDD	\$3.596	\$5.291	\$6.084	\$6.997	\$7.627
Suburban	\$3.700	\$4.659	\$4.892	\$5.136	\$5.393
Fairlawn (Contract)	\$3.541	\$4.216	\$4.427	\$4.648	\$4.881
Master Meter Suburban (\$/1,000 gallons)					
Cuyahoga Falls	\$1.613	\$1.915	\$2.011	\$2.112	\$2.217
DOES - Montrose	\$1.727	\$2.179	\$2.288	\$2.402	\$2.522
DOES - Mudbrook	\$1.567	\$1.830	\$1.922	\$2.018	\$2.119
Lakemore	\$1.572	\$1.805	\$1.895	\$1.990	\$2.089
Tallmadge	\$1.560	\$1.811	\$1.902	\$1.997	\$2.097

Average residential customer uses 7 hcf of water a month.  
Residential billing example (2/1/10 rate/charge): (7 x \$3.794) + \$2.39 = \$28.95 sewer bill for one month (HEAP customer would be less)  
Residential HEAP billing example (2/1/10 rate/charge): (7 x \$3.56) + \$2.24 = \$27.16 sewer bill for one month

Rate increases and billing charge increases after 2013 will be determined by the scope of the long-term control plan, which is in development.

Akron City Council passed legislation that HEAP customers will get a 25 percent discount on the 2010 through 2013 rate increases and billing charge increases (not on the whole bill).

Notes:  
HCF = a hundred cubic feet  
A hundred cubic feet (HCF) = 748 gallons of water  
HEAP = Home Energy Assistance Program (for customers who qualify for this program)  
The sewer charge is determined by water consumption.



“The city’s efforts to clean up the river will benefit the entire region by improving water quality and letting us share the river’s cultural and natural history with more people.”

Keith D. Shy – Director-Secretary, Metro Parks, Serving Summit County



The \$22 million Cuyahoga Street Storage Facility, built in 2006, is one of the most recent upgrades to the sewer system infrastructure. Major improvements are planned for the years to come.

A History Of Improvement

